

## **Migratory Game Bird Committee – Agenda and Meeting Notes**

**May 19, 2015**

**Comfort Suites Hotel, N5780 Kinney Rd., Portage, WI**

9:00 Welcome – Introductions, meeting overview, logistics, agenda repair

9:15 Brian Glenzinski – Legislative update on state waterfowl stamp, and DU National Convention

Update on duck stamp fee increase – Don presented. Ott suggested budget change. Did not change. Ott will forward later as stand-alone – Increase from \$7 to \$12.

Some NGOs are still promoting the concept of a “Habitat Stamp,” but DU prefers the duck stamp to be retained with a fee increase. Kent explained the concept of a Habitat Stamp that has been pitched by folks outside of the DNR, in which all hunters would be required to purchase one and that the revenues would be distributed for multiple habitat project types that would benefit a multitude of game species.

DU has been working on a compromise with legislators to save some Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funding in the state budget. A decision is expected next week.

Kleefisch on NRB authority remains.

DU national convention

Brian – engineering background – and backlog challenge – joint funding, DNR, USFWS etc. but DU position – located in Madison – 3 year position

Engineer – duck stamp funding not desirable – but will we do this in the future?

Draft MOU on the wildlife policy team – would do mostly DNR work but also some USFWS-WWA work

9:25 Other waterfowl/wetland updates from committee members

Kent – Update on DNR staffing and implication with state budget

Kurt – Site visits being conducted for two large NAWCA proposals in Wisconsin. Federal NAWCA budget is taking another hit.

9:40 Canadian Habitat funding proposals:

**9:40 - Delta Waterfowl Foundation funding request – Matt Chouinard**

Adopt a pothole – Allow dry year tilling of small wetlands

Long term easements – MHHC

Land prices have tripled in the last few years.

Kent Questions:

All Wisconsin funding for permanent easement – temp employees ? Yes. Contract employees...Not sure if that compares to temporary/seasonal or long term.

Stability of MMHC? Okay

What money Does Delta put into WI? Very little. Few chapters do recruitment. Mentored hunting programs are in place, and some hen house projects.

The \$1 is for Delta is from where? - Members

**10:00 - Ducks Unlimited funding request – Brian Glenzinski**

Kent Questions

- Habitat work done with WI money in Canada? DU - Yes. Delta - No
- Land purchase fate? Final ownership – Varies, DU, private, local gov.

10:20 – Q&A for applicants, followed by committee discussion and recommendations for funding

Thoughts around the table

Steve - reduce Delta reduce by \$20,000 (over the biennium)

Paul Samerdyke – Both proposals have merit. Can more go to Canada? No – Both good proposals. Could go along with Steve's idea of giving \$80,000 to Delta and the rest to DU.

Jason – Provided committee members background history that Delta and DU are currently getting the same percentage of funding relative to their requests that were submitted two years ago.

Peter Z. – Providing same percentage to each organization could be a slippery slope to unreasonable requests in order to compete in the future. Good idea – Funding Delta's request in full and then rest to DU. Easements probably strongest aspect.

Tyler – diversify is always a good strategy. Likes the idea of awarding each organization the same percentage again.

If revenue projections are accurate, then each organization would receive about 72% of their request.

Jim H – both doing good stuff on the ground and both have good match – Do want to get some \$ to both organizations – Like diversity of strategy of DU. Same % to each.

Peter D – Asked about details of the salaries that would be supported in these proposals. Okay with same % to each.

Eddie – both good proposals – on the ground – conservation easements very important in this region – private lands – long term acquisition is also good for ducks – not exact one for one – favor some – DU – 77% (309k) and Delta 53% (53k) of request

Taylor – don't put all eggs in one basket – give to each (same %)

Bill – likes 2 organizations to appeal to different landowners – perpetual conservation easements best bang for the buck. Don't see a problem with salary on contract basis. Nor does he see some temporary farming of the wetland as a problem. Prorate it as last year.

Pete – Not much to add to what has been said – no glaring differences – 72.4% of request to each

Jeff – percentages – what percent do we want to give to Canada from stamp revenues? – Jason this is mandated by statutes, no flexibility. Same % of request for each organization seems fine.

Todd – had concern about Canada \$ but Kent convinced me - go along with the percent of total available as suggested by others.

Kurt – easements are important – DU commitment to the state of Wisconsin has been huge so this favors DU. 1,200 Delta members in WI. 38,000 DU in Wisconsin. 80% requested by DU (\$160K/yr) and rest to Delta.

Jason – contribution back to state by DU should be considered to favor them. However, easement programs are important. Enforcement is important. Winter wheat program and BMPs have been good.

**Funding Recommendation to Wildlife Policy Team - \$289,600 to DU, and \$72,400 to Delta over the biennium. Note – These dollar figures are based on assumed Canadian habitat revenue of \$181,000/yr, but percentage and dollar figures are likely to change slightly up or down based on actual revenues.**

Brian – A separate application form should be created in the future, specifically for Canadian Habitat projects. Jason will look into this for the next stamp application round.

10:50 Waterfowl regulations update and duck zones – Kent

11:20 FY16-17 Waterfowl Stamp funding

- Overall account balance and projected revenues for the biennium - \$101K unencumbered current balance not tied to ongoing projects, and about \$367K/yr projected in new revenues over the next two years.

- Consideration of funding options for non-traditional stamp funded project work: contingency cushion for emergencies and project budget over-runs, routine wetland maintenance, wetland equipment purchases, and engineering.

12:00 Lunch on site (pizza)

12:30 Ongoing FY15 Waterfowl stamp project carryover requests and committee approvals

Columbia County – mud lake – okay

Hogseth – WCR – private lands restoration – Okay but get some help – if no project in the pipeline then pull funding and get something else done. Jason will follow-up on details of the project status.

Woodbury – lower wolf – wilderness pool 1 & 2 – staffing changes may have delayed work – most of the work done – And Osprey flowage approved as well.

NER 1 – Jim H – Grand River ditch plug done this summer – was hoping to use fire control but did not work out.

NER 8 – eastern lakeshore area – Yes tentative – but do they need all of it. Dan Wiedert – need more information.

NOR – Kevin Morgan – Joel Marsh replacement structure – large project with lots of engineering. Needs to be rebuilt from the beginning – good marsh – wild rice – very deep into this and ready to pull the trigger – lots of bidding issues etc. – Okay for now – Pete says done by the end of August.

SER 3 – Paul Samerdyke – Horicon – Ebert II restoration – staffing change – DU funded most – listed as \$22,000 – but only need \$8,200 in to FY16. Give us this and we will return the rest of funding. Decision-return \$13,800 to stamp account for new projects.

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## **12:50 FY16-17 Waterfowl Stamp funding (Wisconsin habitat projects)**

- Overview of committee rankings for new Wisconsin projects, and the process/timeline for selecting and funding projects.
- Go through list of ranked projects and discuss recommendations for funding within the expected budget. DNR Wildlife district reps may provide details on proposals within their district and discuss their priorities.

\$838,636 is the anticipated funding availability for new Wisconsin projects in FY16-17.

Jason discusses partial funding – some proposals allowed this. How do we approach this? Some partial makes sense and some don't.

**Bergstrom project – DOT mitigation site** – Jason – give only \$17,500 and then ask for other funding from Capital Development. This was a late application due to a misunderstanding that DNR funds were

secured for the project, which was not the case. A NAWCA grant and assistance from DU and Outagamie County has been committed – DNR just needs to come up with their share of the cost.

Brian – not a good idea to let in a late project after deadline without some sort of penalty – rather let NED use another project fund them if Bergstrom is a higher priority. Good recommendation – agree – NRCS –

Folks would like to press DOT for help since that this is their mitigation site. Lots of history with this site. DNR will press DOT to assist in phase II of the project on another part of the flowage after they can demonstrate that DNR and partners have already chipped in.

Set aside this and come back after all ranked. Brian G.

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Jason – wants to have more allocated than \$150,000 for routine maintenance across the state – ask for more PR funding across regions.

Brian G. – suggest we approve the first 3 at the top of the ranking list, and then talk about farm bill.

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But.... Jim H – asks question on first project – WCD 10 – What is private land enhancement? – Ryan H – Enhance 72 ac – Jim asks if anyone knows. – Called Ryan – 30 ac invasive control – 40 acres better hydrology. Approve the private land restoration and hydrologic work, flap gate but not the invasive plant control. Give \$50,000 – partial – Give advice to submit smaller more defined projects in the future.

NED 2 – Jason F – high cost to restore 2 ac which is part – The other part is Bohn farm really good – All okay to fund in full.

SOD 8 – leverage lots of grant funding – OK approved

Farm Bill biologist – multiple funding sources – so duck stamp portion is being asked because they promote WRE. Kurt – can we focus this funding on our priority areas.? Brian \$25k is not much relative to the others – Money well spent - Steve B support – approved all

NED 1 – approve – all good

NED 10 – Reduce request down to \$30,000, since this work unit is carrying over existing funds for the same type of work.

NOR 4 – Joel Marsh – Okay to supplement existing budget if needed. If additional duck stamp funds are not needed, then allocate to the next project(s) on the list that did not make the funding cut.

COOP 2 – WWA – Peter – all good

NOR 1 – GLIFWC likely will help – NAWCA match future potential – low cost – some question if they can do it for this cost, but local technician assured these estimates.

SOD 7 – Horicon channel – rock river channel – redirect water in normal course resettling sediment and more edge and huntable habitat – plug off boat access – DU already providing engineer - \$200k altogether – all approved. Duck stamp would be phase I of a larger project.

WCD 5 – Bill Mead – dike south rice lake 1960's dike – take time to build better than in the past – partly refuge – heavily hunted – all good

WCD 4 – West honey island dike renovation – all good

WCD 3 – Wood County WA, Ball Rd. 4<sup>th</sup> impoundment –all

WCD 8 – Meadow Valley SW Refuge Pool, west dike - all good

NED 3 – Navarino – Concerns about getting all this work done in this work unit with prior history of not completing projects on time – already asked for carry over – what is the top priority – don't fund if they don't finish what they had. (Note- Navarino and Lower Wolf River properties are now managed by separate work units).

Group reached down list to look at NED projects as a whole with District priorities.

Approve NED 9, as it was the highest priority for Wolf River crew. NED 5 (Herb Behnke flowage) ranked high enough, however will be replaced with NED 11 (Bergstrom complex). Both Navarino proposals (NED 3 & 4) will be recommended for funding, as they have ranked high enough.

NOR 5 – fund beaver control – impacting large acreage for wild rice – good for ducks, people – consistent with beaver management plan? Future wild rice plan? – Peter David – in alignment with this. Funding an ongoing management and cost shared. Fund APHIS to do the work. Mixed feelings on the committee. Requires consistent funding every year to keep up with the need. Is this consistent with the beaver plan and overall management objectives? Kent checked online - yes consistent with the draft beaver management plan.

COOP 5 – USFWS application – Harvey's marsh WPA –Refuge folks – first phase funded by NAWCA – Pete no problem with wetland restoration but grass planting? Brian – already planted grass but mostly maintenance – Fund it with a message don't want to fund grass, only wetland restoration – Jason will speak with Bruce.

SOD 12 – Mike Foy – lots of work with NAWCA – small portion of overall project – concern that it may be dragging on with changes. Fund in full to wrap-up ongoing work.

SOD 9 – Likely to get some money from the City of Sun Prairie – would like to lower this – Andy may have support – 50% could come from city – was it historically high level or not. Called Andy P. Andy says it is 8 feet at deepest. Probably should be 3-4 feet. Set level at historic high water level. However, always at high water levels so no fluctuation. Group concerned that not enough work has been done to assure completion in biennium with potential permitting problems ahead. Let's put it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of

the biennium if he can get his permitting in line. Give \$30,000 duck stamp to project, assuming another \$30,000 will be sought from Sun Prairie.

NED 8 – Sensiba – West shore - problem with a dike leaking – need to do a clay core. Cooperative grant. Brian fund at \$50,000 duck stamp if SOGL grant comes through to leverage funding, or retain \$69,250 if SOGL is not awarded.

SOD 6 - GHRA – waterfowl nesting habitat – mostly LTE funding to carry out – concern over this. Reduce to \$60,000 duck stamp is okay.

WCD 6 – North Smokey Hill – phase 2 – Did part of the work already – need to get the funds to wrap-up. Okay by committee.

SOD 1 – Paradise Marsh - Discussion about enhancement. Okay by committee.

Jim H – Should we increase Emergency funds? – contingency – small amount - \$50,000 – biennium – group trusts Jason to use as needed for next 2 years. Okay by committee.

**At line 28 with \$50,000 left after all decisions above**

NOR 3 – Bump up on list to give NOR more projects and catch up with critical needs. Fund partially at \$10,800 – Remove LTE aspect of budget.

COOP 3 will be funded by USFWS and WWA – Remove from duck stamp list

**At about \$25,000 – now in discussion**

WCD 9 - SW dike sandhill kick that can down the road since they have projects. Not approved

SOD 11 - \$10,000 – Some surprised this ranked as low as it did. Okay by committee.

SOD 2 – Okay by committee

Discussion of equipment – WPT needs to step up and fund equipment – Please find the funding for the low ground equipment.

All other project below funding cut-off line will not be funded this biennium with duck stamp funding, unless funding becomes free from other projects from the top portion of the list.

Pete – Suggests holding a meeting or a tour at Sandhill WMA next time to see some sites within that work unit.

3:50 Opportunity for public comment - None

4:00 Adjourn